

# **Rene: The Soundless Speaker**



## Preface

**He who has conquered doubt and fear has conquered failure. His every thought is allied with power; and all difficulties are bravely met and wisely overcome.**

**Self-doubt is the most dangerous and path blocking object. It never lets an individual move ahead with confidence, paving his own field of abundance and prosperity, rather it creates an imaginary cage of self-imprisonment. All these years of my life have been the years of hesitancy, indecision and vacillation. But, deep within there was flame waiting to be ignited so that it could brighten up my whole world.**

**Writing a book was a long-cherished dream of mine. So here is my first short**

novel depicting the story of a girl named Rene.

Rene is a soundless speaker. Nobody can hear her talk, her family feels she is indifferent and disinterested in their affairs but she is a keen observer of human behavior. She has her own galaxy within. She does not believe in speaking anything as she doubts that the people around her would not be able to understand her. This is the plight of many of us, we are so much within in our own thoughts that we fail to express ourselves to the world outside.

Rene talks about her family, work and relationships and along with that she goes deeper into the concepts of everything she feels and understands. Her world is both gloomy and interesting. She is quiet yet so loud in thinking. She is sarcastic as well as empathetic. She is just a normal girl with

**some special thoughts. Let's explore her world.**

**Rupinder Maliya**



**Who am I not to Trust the Universe?**





## **Acknowledgements**

**I am indebted to many people, who have helped me becoming what I am today. Words might fail to express my deeper gratitude to them but I have tried my best. First and foremost, I am grateful to my grandfather and parents, who have given me the gift of education. This gift which actually helped me illuminate the dark world within me. My siblings for being there and giving me the boost, I always need.**

**I am grateful to all my teachers who saw my worth much before I could see it. Their motivating words have always uplifted my soul.**

**I am blessed to have a supportive family after marriage, they have never stopped**

**me from spreading my wings. My husband for telling me that he is always with me in my quest for something bigger in life.**

**My two sons are my heart and soul, I cannot take my decisions without having a talk with them. They are my biggest supporters and critics too.**

**Finally, I would extend my gratitude to Mr. Aakash Bhabad Founder & CEO of ABCD International whose call for the world record made me come up with my own first published work.**

**Thank you!**

## Prologue

There is a whole silent world within each one of us. We want ourselves to be heard and yet are afraid of the judgements. We want our echoes to meet the walls of a fellow being's senses but at the same time we want to keep everything secret. Rene is one such character, full of stories, full of so many thoughts and analysis. she observes everything going on around her, she has read a lot of books and surfs internet to gain knowledge.

She has certain flaws and is well aware of them. Basically, she wants to concentrate on the goodness of the world and tries to find out the positive traits of individuals. She is afraid of petty fights, negativity and lack of love. Her life has shown her situations where while seeking love she

**was left with disappointments, dismay and regret.**

**She has a magical sense of belief still culminating inside her and which actually erupts exactly at the right time in the story. The pages ahead, are the conversations of hers with her own self as if she is talking to the whole Universe.**

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“If you are too tired to speak, sit next to me, because I, too, am fluent in silence.”

**R. Arnold**





## **Rene: The Human**

Thoughts which keep on moving all around my head sometimes take me to the unimaginable worlds. In general terms, it can be said that I love to build castles in the air (you never know which castle actually becomes a reality!) I guess according to the Ayurvedic doshas my Vata dosh is little more in ratio in proportion to the other two doshas : Pitta and Kapha. Seems interesting no!

Since childhood, I have always imagined myself moving to different countries and meeting all the celebrities from around the world. By the way, I had deep interactions with them and tried to understand their point of view in detail. Confused?

Welcome to my world!

I am Rene, working as a receptionist at Sunrise Dental Clinic. I am 5' 3". I have long hair and brown eyes. I love to mention this. I have little uneven teeth though. People say I look beautiful when I smile, of course, I do. Let me tell you about my white beaded purse which I bought from Mussourie last summer. So, now you know what I did last summer! Bad joke, just trying to be funny.

I don't want to tell you any other thing related to me; like my family, friends or boyfriends because that is a gloomy world of some uninteresting stories and useless fellows I met. Therefore, I don't want to talk about them (May be later .... otherwise, what else will I talk?). I just want to talk about myself, as recently I fell in love with myself which I could not do or imagine in the last 26 years of my life. I am a very simple person with high imagination and very expensive dreams. Well, day dreaming

is my passion and you know what I don't let anyone interfere with my inner universe. There I have my own galaxies and unique Time and space dimensions.

I know all this okay!

I am not an ordinary receptionist, faking smiles or unnecessarily frowning at people. No, that is not Rene. By the way my parents named me Reena, since I disliked the name just as I hated the kind of person I was within the frame of that name so I started calling myself Rene. Dr Bakshi still calls me Reena, as I have not disclosed my true identity to the world here on this Milky way. You know what I mean. Only I know I am Rene, the world has not discovered it yet.

I know you might be thinking that may be this girl has lost her mind or something like that, she does not know what she is

talking.....she is talking nonsense and all. Well! the other day I was reading Carl Gustav Jung and he said this thing that Man (Woman too) has a specific pattern of living in this world and he (she too) never looks inside or tries to identify his own reality and when a man (or a woman) realizes what he (or she) is, then he (she too) starts to call himself (herself) crazy. The world of course has the self-proclaimed right to call such an individual crazy (this is my belief not of Jung). The world has always criticized individuals who were vocal about their needs and aspirations. Society, culture, traditions. beliefs and faith, they all have added up to choke the throats of any soul who tried to breathe life as per their own wishes. Don't you agree?

Rene, I mean I am, a soul on some quest to know more about life and its colours. To tell you more about myself, I just love colours, I

get ASMR to see videos related to falling colours or haphazardly thrown colours and somebody dipped in colours. By the way, I met Rohan on a day of Holi, he was totally messed up in those black and blue colours, half soaked in water and half dried. Such a stupid boy he was. He said women cannot make good leaders and was working in a bank under a female boss whom he admired the most. We dated for a while then broke up as he was not ready to understand my time and space dimensions. I cried continuously while playing ghazals of Jagjit Singh and heartbreak songs of Olivia Rodrigo. Thank God! Mirzapur's season 2 was out then and I could manage my pain and binge watched the episodes. Where there is a will there is a webseries!

How we choose to respond to life circumstances is our choice nobody can interfere with our inner world until we give

them the liberty to do so. So, when Rohan body shamed me, I took the decision to throw him back to world where he belonged to; crap. I don't want to live my life in a figure 8 loop and keep on meeting craps over and over again. He was the third person I fell in love with in the last 5 years and that was the end of the chain. I was not insane to repeat the same circles of broken and torn apart heart. I stepped back and examined my actions, the actions of trusting people blindly just because they smiled back or replied to my text. I knew it was high time I stopped and started to focus on things which were much needed like self-love and emotional healing.

The magic was, I actually became more clear about what I wanted in life. I feel the tears purified my inner system and cleared my vision and I came out of my cave of spleen and took a breath of deep relief and

rejuvenation. It's not that I forgot everything overnight, it took me many days but finally I was out. I had spent my childhood watching Bobby Deol chasing Aishwarya Rai in the Alps with her name written with flowers outside her hotel room, it was quite difficult for me to reprogramme my bollywoodized brain to a better thinking mind but still I managed. I will never forgive my elder sister Kavita for placing that DVD on the table openly while I was getting bored on that unfortunate weekend. And there I was humming all day.....Meri saanson me basa hai tera hi ek naam.....yuck!

***Make bold choices and make mistakes. It's all those things that add to the person you become.***

**Guru Angelina Jolie!**





## **Compassionate Cavita: Bad Habits Die Hard**

So this compassionate Cavita I mean Kavita my elder sis has a deep-well kind of a heart where she can give space to all the creepy people, like my always cribbing mommy, unstoppable gossip mongering of the neighbouring aunts, fake accent of my cousin Binod sorry Vinod and most importantly her husband from Spain Sri Sri Naresh PHD in Lying. I mean I can't believe the kind of patience this girl has. The spontaneous overflow of her affection and empathy overpowers my logical ability to understand the concept of "Ignorance is bliss".

How can some of us be such super empaths and a few on the other hand super cunning?

Let yourself explore this quiz along with my average abilities of comprehending the concepts. While sitting on my chair and completing the excel file related to the patients' data, I would love to understand the subject of trust and betrayal. Recently completed Season 2 of You, having said that I defy the concept of everything is fair in love and war. Neither should we be waging war against someone if they snatch something from us nor should we be blindly in love with somebody.

I remember after my break up I Googled 'Trust & Betrayal' and it showed me Rurouni Kenshin: Trust and Betrayal an animated series. I was very upset with the result as I disliked animated series back then, since I had not watched Death Note at that point of time. Okay come back to the point. What is trust? And what the hell is

betrayal? According to *His Holiness the Dalai Lama*

**“To earn trust, money and power aren’t enough; you have to show some concern for others. You can’t buy trust in the supermarket.”**

I feel trust is like that glue which keeps the human race stick to one another without the fear of falling apart. I have seen trust in the eyes of people when Dr Bakshi gives anesthesia to them to treat the rotten fruits of their life long experimentation with unhealthy eating habits. They treat Dr Bakshi with a kind of devotion as if he is their Lord of the Cavity.

Trust is when my sister Kavita believes the white lies of her husband, who has been telling her from the last 6 and a half years that he is going to come to India and bring her along with him back to Spain. An uncle

of ours told us 2 years ago that he saw Vinod in their village, he stayed there for three days and then returned to Spain. The reason for his visit was his ailing mother. Kavita's in laws never accepted her as their daughter in law. The main reason behind it was Kavita's uneven teeth, that was probably the reason for my joining Dr Bakshi's clinic. You might be wondering as to what connection does it have with Kavita? I should have rather become a dentist then with my own set of uneven teeth. That is a long story but I will share it soon.

Bringing your attention back to trust, this feeling of trust is quite strange as usually we end up trusting the most disgusting people. Our heart becomes skeptical when it's time to trust the simple and honest souls but we often quickly fall into the trap of honey dipped lies of strangers. You know

when I met this guy from Dehradun Raghav. I blindly trusted his analysis of my inner beauty forgetting the fact that he had never had any mindful talk with me and is not even aware about my family or background. Why are we women so vulnerable that just a mere thought of getting attention from a man makes us feel like Cleopatra in her exotic bath.

Oh! Cleopatra, a fantasy of every man (and women too). Who was she ? Well, I know she does not need any introduction. Cleopatra as per the popular belief was a mistress of disguise and costume. For years Hollywood has been presenting her tumbling out of unfurled carpet. She was somewhat disheveled but dressed in her best finery at that time. Even when Kavita's mother-in-law came to see her for the first time, we made her dress in her best finery actually the turning point was when she

laughed and her monster in law I mean mother in law became little uncomfortable to see her teeth. I was the first one to pick that and also pointed it to the whole family but everyone ignored my call by saying that I am not mature enough to judge all this.

Naresh had also given the assurance that his mother is very happy with this match. Here enters the serpent of betrayal. When after her marriage she went to Naresh's place, she was disrespected and insulted. None, valued her. Each day she was scolded for her appearance, lack of education and was told not to laugh or smile in front of the neighbouring ladies. But, look at this compassionate soul, she followed all the instructions, bore the insults and even arranged money for her good for nothing husband to make him move to Spain with the false promises of taking her along with him during the next visit. Many days and

nights have passed since that day. Kavita returned to our house the very next day he left for Spain. Her father in law dropped her and told us that he could not afford her expenses as the son had also moved abroad, therefore she could live here to which Kavita had replied , “Papa ji, is such a humble person”.

When humans betray the trust of another human don't they feel any gush of shame running in their veins? The innocent affections of one soul are torn apart by another of its own clan. I find it strange that we all seek love and affection but when it comes easily to us we take it for granted and thrash badly. People like Kavita also irritate me who play the victim intentionally without being ready to face the reality.

तुम्हारे आने की उम्मीद बर नहीं आती  
मैं राख होने लगा हूँ दिए जलाते हुए

I found this couplet, the other day, in Kavita's diary and had tears in my eyes imagining her inner state which she had always hidden from the world by giggling all the time.



## **Nupur: The Chaiwala**

Exactly at 11:30 am, Nupur enters the door of the clinic as a messiah of caffeine addicted souls. I feel grateful and ecstatic to see him with his tools. Nupur is a tea boy, who works at Lalji's Tea shop. Nupur distributes tea around the market with an aluminum jug and a lot of paper cups in his hand. He is a 19 years old boy with a lean body structure and a height of 5'8". He wanted to study further, the old story of many boys, but could not, due to financial hiccups and also his father forced him to start working instead of wasting time on college. I don't want to comment on this as I feel a kind of anguish within me while thinking about such people who feel education is waste of time.

While looking at a boy of 15 years, sitting in front of me at the front office with braces on his teeth, throwing tantrums on his mother and playing free fire, I feel sad for people like Nupur who always agree to their parents' decisions and bury their own passions deep somewhere inside their hearts. Nupur always comes smiling towards me, hands over the tea without spilling it on the desk and asks about how is life at my end. I always reply, "Sab badiya".

People like him remind me of all those souls who succumbed to the burns inflicted by family and society. Dreams are to be seen. Dreams are to be chased. Dreams are to be cherished. Dreams are to be fulfilled. Dreams are to be broken and fixed again. Dreams are to be breathed and lived. Dreams are the visualization of our future endeavours. I believe, one who has no

dreams, does not actually live, he or she mere exists.

Each day when I open my eyes, while lying on the ancient bed (my grandma's possession and then mine) beside the window with sunrays falling straight on my face, I promise myself to make peace with the world, whose ways I have never liked. However, when I reach the clinic, after appearing in my domestic court, full of new questions related to salary and my plans for marriage, I sit on my chair, start the desktop and carry on with the booking of appointments for the day, I meet such blood-sucking creatures who get on to my nerves and make me believe in Wasseypur and Mirzapur again and again.

Today, after dealing with the 'lady in a floral saree', who comes here regularly for the root canal and creates drama at front office as if she is Victoria Beckham, I saw Nupur

entering the door with a smile, I felt a kind of relief from the monotony. Nupur actually seems divine to me, how he is able to keep a smile on his face even when he knows he is sailing in a rudderless boat. Actually, there are many of us, who are dealing with their lives as if it's some kind of task assigned, we don't feel it and we don't count it as a blessing. So when I ask him, what drives him to be smiling and keeping himself happy throughout the day, his answer has somewhat opened my eyes. He said, "Didi, it's okay to have no ambitions. It's okay to give the reigns of life to the Universe and let it decide everything. I did not come to this world knowing where I was going to be born and what would be my fate. The power which brought me to this world must have a reason behind keeping me away from my passion of pursuing education and providing me with this jug of tea. I am at least making people

like you happy, who would not have any means to feel good otherwise”.

Though I was not much convinced with the point that Universe is keeping him away from his dream of getting education as he is more knowledgeable than many of us, the only thing is he has not got the chance to earn a college degree. I told him to apply for distance education but he seemed unsure. He is young and passionate. I am quite sure that he will find out some way.

They say...

**Will power is like a muscle, the more you train it, the stronger it gets.**

**“It’s not that some people have the willpower and some don’t. It’s that some people are ready to change and others are**

**not.”**

**James Gordon**

## **Dil Ka Doctor: Dr Vikas Bakshi from Dharamshala**

Doc saab as he is popularly called by his patients, is a very humble person. He has come from Dharamshala, the land of Dalai Lama after Tibet. Dr Bakshi, as I call him, is a self-motivated and a man of less ambitions. He resembles Eckart Tolle. He is not a spiritual kind of a person but a Karam yogi. He believes in doing his work and nothing else, no gossips and no gyan. He is a great listener. He listens to the never-ending tales of his patients who tell him their family history and other facts during the diagnostic session. How is he able to do so? How can you listen to some useless tale for such a long duration of time, knowing already that the person is just wasting your time?

I once asked Dr Bakshi that was he really listening to the person or just pretending. He replied in his sage mode, “Reena, They need someone to listen to them, they trust me and I am just a free man with not much work”. I looked at the list of waiting patients and wanted to jump from the second floor(this is a two story clinic).But, then I told myself why to end up lame, it’s okay if he was happy with those concocted stories.

Dr Bakshi is a kind hearted person, when I came to him after completing my graduation, for the job of a receptionist which he had posted as an advertisement in the local paper, he just asked me if I was a patient person with a lot of stamina to endure tiredness throughout the day.I thought it’s just a seating job where I will be writing things on the desktop and on my diary, and I was already good at talking to



strangers, I had not imagined the kind of varieties I would meet at the front office. I was so happy as Dr Bakshi did not judge me for my looks, I was quite chubby then and of course my own teeth were a tale to be told. I had also asked him to help me in the beautification of my teeth but he told me that I looked perfect in my imperfection. Now, what could I say?

Dr Bakshi is as calm as the Himalayan mountains and his stature in the city is as high as Mount Everest. Every person living in this city respects him. He has never been a part of any controversy, rather he has solved many with his insight and wisdom. I feel amazed to see him daily from the last few years, never changing a bit and being the same person, full of soothing charm and peaceful demeanor. He has an equally charming wife and two daughters. His elder daughter is a lecturer in a reputed college in

New Delhi and the younger daughter is a music teacher in Bengaluru. Both are happily married with cute kids. Mrs Bakshi owns a small playschool at her home.

When I look at this family then I feel that yes, peaceful families do exist. Is it because of the calmness of the man and the woman that the children also become talented or is it a God's gift which a very few people have the pleasure of possessing? When I look at the chaos at my own house, I feel jealous of Dr Bakshi's daughters.

For many years, I opened my eyes in the morning amidst my parents' arguments. They both have certain loopholes in their personalities but both blame each other for everything that goes a bit offtrack. My mother and father got married against their wishes and always consider each other as a burden .There marriage for them is just a societal pressure and custom they need to

keep on moving with. They have fought everywhere, at family gatherings, outings, Satsangs, marriages, birthday parties, funerals and also at the Result declarations at our schools. I don't think my mother has ever asked my father whether he liked the food or not and likewise even he has never appreciated her that the food is delicious today. Sundays used to be the worst days as my father would be at home, the moment he would tell my sister to prepare tea for the second time after the breakfast, my mother would shout at the top of her voice that today this man would drink the whole milk kept in the fridge. To which he would reply that it's his home and everything inside it was his hard earned possession and he would today take 10 cups of tea.

Compassionate Kavita would keep on trying a middleman strategies to bring peace between the two parties, knowing she

would not get any positive results but still act as a fake UNO. Why on Earth some people pretend to abide by the social norms by living together in an unhappy marriage and create social disharmony? Well! I guess their minds are programmed in a way ,due to their social culture that it's okay to cry and feel frustrated only to tell the world that they respect the traditions and customs. I remember my mother saying this every day that she would jump in the nearby river. Though, she never did that but for all of us it was like living in that river each day and struggling to breathe as we did not know the survival technique.

My brother, Atul, was the luckiest, as he would go out of the house making use of his male benefits. He was always happy in his own world of friends and a gaming corner in our locality. He was not answerable to anyone as he was the son of the house. I

think my habit of imagination owes a lot to my parents' fights. I used to keep myself in my room, overhearing their threats to each other and creating my own world with pillows. How selfish it is on their part to never try to understand what do these children feel and hide within. Therefore, I prefer working at Dr Bakshi's clinic and spend my whole day here among useless people but having the assurance that Doc Saab is there to guide me whenever I feel the upheavals. He is indeed, more of a Dil ka Doctor along with Daant Ka Doctor.

**“Sometimes, reaching out and taking someone's hand is the beginning of a journey.**

**At other times, it is allowing another to take yours.”**

**— Vera**

**Nazarian, The Perpetual Calendar of  
Inspiration**

## **Healing Heart with Hema Ji**

Mrs. Hema Bakshi is the wife of Dr Bakshi. She is a wonderful woman with a pleasant personality. I believe Dr Bakshi deserved this kind of a wife only rather they both deserve each other. She once told me about her first meeting with Dr Bakshi, it was at Jammu during a wedding ceremony. Dr Bakshi's mother liked Hema ji at first sight and suggested this alliance. Hema ji's family agreed at once as they had heard a lot of appreciation for the Bakshi Family.

Hema ji has excellent aesthetic skills, it's reflected well in the way she has decorated her small yet comfy house. The way she has flower vines on the walls dropping down like a beautiful belle's tresses. The kitchen garden is my most favorite place. The colour combination of curtains and wall

colours, everything is worth writing verses on.

Another surprisingly amazing thing is the way she has decorated the door trims with bright colours. Everything in her house is so artsy and sophisticated. Hema ji and Dr Bakshi has a big collection of books related to different genres, be it novels, short stories, sci-fi, plays, books related to medicine and yoga, you can find everything on the book shelf nicely decorated with the bulky vases on the sides and decorated plates.

She never fails to impress me with her sense of creativity and wisdom. I feel as if it's a chakras healing meditation going on unconsciously when she is around.

Today, I am free as the last patient has already left and Dr Bakshi has also gone to the bank for some FD related work. I want



to think and explore the vibrational frequency between certain couples, how they are able to maintain harmony but others fail even to come to general agreement. What makes you a successful couple? I want to explore this topic as a single person. So that I don't end up being a replica of my parents.

Marriage according to Google (Yes Google, for a person like me Google is a research engine...oh! Us overthinkers) is also called matrimony or wedlock is a culturally and often legally recognized union between people called spouses. It establishes rights and obligations between them, as well as between them and their children, and between them and their in-laws. Rights and obligations, huh!

When I look at my family, I feel it's a burdened obligation whereas Hema Ji and Dr Bakshi represent an Image of a sweet

obligation. Marriages are made in heaven, they say. Are they really? I think if you are with an understanding and loving partner then they seem heavenly otherwise they end up giving the feel of a devil's curse.

Indeed, ups and downs are a part of life and we cannot expect a smooth journey altogether. But if it becomes a long bumpy ride then obviously one becomes nauseous. I believe first of all both the individuals need to give space to each other for breathing. They should be friends who can accept each other's flaws and still appreciate. Moreover, it's all about partnership. Nobody is the master and no one is the slave. Both are equals, they are a team.

You know showing gratitude to each other can really make it a journey worth taking. Sometimes people are not able to understand each other's stress and anxiety,

just like in the case of my parents. Both did not want to get married, it was a forced marriage but they never took a productive step, either to call it an off or work on it. Rather they thought to create hell for each other and for their own offspring. By the way this offspring also emerged under societal pressure. It also took a drastic turn, first having two unwelcomed daughters and then a son. They might have never tried for a second child had it been my brother at the first place. Anyways, let's come back to the point.

I also feel that before marriage, couples should be sent for a compulsory counselling related to conflict management. They should know the ways to manage anger and control the emotional outburst. They should be told how to keep a check on their inner voice which makes the outer voice seem a headache to their partner. They

must be made aware of the fact that dialogue is important to resolve any problem instead of going quiet.

I have made up my mind to go for a therapy with Hema ji and Dr Bakshi before I say yes on the wedding aisle. Oh! what a poetic thought.

My thought of train just got off track when a beautiful lady with jasmine flowers stuck in her hair bun, entered the clinic. She was dressed in a nicely pleated saree and had a carry bag full of vegetables in her hand. I told her to sit, she was sweating, I offered her a glass of water. She thanked me and told me that she had a daughter just my age, named Aloka. Within the span of my filling her form and dropping her to Dr Bakshi's cabin, she told me thousands of stories of her daughter. She is Geeta ji, a lady living nearby our clinic. Her visits are regular now as she is going through a

dental treatment with us and from her I got another story to share with you. The story of Geeta ji and her daughter Aloka and their new beginning. I just love to listen to such stories of people and understand their lives. And the crux is we all are simple beings, just the rules of the game make us do certain things which otherwise we don't like but we do everything keeping in mind this is supposed to be done in this way.

Sometimes, if we have a job, we overdo everything and ignore our own selves. We say that we are doing this for our family but in the process we forget the very family for whom we do everything. Ironical!

“Connecting with someone is not necessarily a bond with a significant other, or even a friend, but can be the indefinable - perhaps the rarest and most precious

thing in life to find at all.”

— Donna Lynn Hope

## **Aloka: The lost daughter**

She could see the golden sunbeams coming through the silvery white netted curtains and fall over the Oriental lilies dwelling and the transparent glass that was kept on the Maple wood accent table in the living area. Indeed, it was a pleasant sight, inexplicable, she was a great admirer of lilies. A strange silence had engulfed the whole room as she sat there looking towards the window behind the curtains and enjoyed the evening cardamom tea.

Aloka was an HR consultant who had devoted 8 years of her life to GS Enterprises. During all these years she

knew nothing other than her work and deadlines at the workplace. Under the influence of a sense of so called dedication she forgot every other aspect of her life. She even forgot Ammu (Geeta ji), her mother, who was solely dependent on her.

Aloka returned to Ammu's house 5 years ago after Bimal, Aloka's husband died in an accident. She was reflecting on the day, when she entered Ammu's house with her baggage and tried to give a new start to her life. She spent the next two months sobbing and missing Bimal. She had lost all the hopes and the driving force to live a happy life. Some people advised her to get remarried, others told to pursue



some further study or to join some workplace. She was devastated, did not know what to do. Then Ammu suggested her to continue with the job she was doing before getting married to Bimal and become self-dependent. She gathered her torn soul pieces and decided to give herself a second chance.

But what about Ammu? She also had a lot of expectations from her daughter. Aloka could not figure out how to make a balance between dedication towards work and looking after Ammu. She became so busy in her work that she ignored her own mother in this new journey. Ammu started to feel low and desolate. First

her husband left her, then the son and now the daughter was also not understanding her plight. Ammu still dragged herself and took care of all the things so that Aloka did not worry about the food and other things. She would keep her dress ready before Aloka left for office and also her lunch so that she did not have to eat the mess food.

But it was just yesterday, when Aloka's dedication towards her work was challenged by a few opponents and she was humiliated at an open forum and without an iota of doubt her wavering barque was held tightly and refuge to her teary eyes and shattered soul was provided by Ammu.

There is no denying the fact that sometimes we take relations for granted. Ammu was a retired teacher, who had spent her whole life struggling hard for her kids. Being a widow, she was the sole bread earner of the family. Aloka was the eldest and Milind was younger to her. He went to Germany to pursue MBA and got a lucrative job there so there was “no logic in returning to India” according to him.

Sitting on the sofa she went down the memory lane and recalled the lovely moments Ammu, Milind and she had experienced in the small house with

one bedroom a small living area, a washroom and small verandah leading to the iron gate of the house. Ammu had really turned the verandah into a garden of her sweet dreams. The intoxicating fragrances of Rajnigandha, Roses, Jasmines and Ketaki had filled the atmosphere with spell casting perfumes.

Shedding off the spell of imagination, her eyes got fixed on the Maple accent table, which was brought by Milind during his last and the only visit in all those years. The silence and her gaze were shook by the footsteps of Ammu as she entered the living area humming her favourite tunes. “Arre,

Ladki, you did not switch on the verandah light and my flowers are thirsty “, said Ammu keeping the vegetables which she brought from the Som Bazar (Monday Market). “Why are you sitting so quietly here, come on, switch on the TV and listen to your favourite songs on MTV.” Aloka smiled and said, “Ammu I no more watch songs on MTV.”

She got up from the sofa with a jump and entered the kitchen, hugging Ammu from behind. “I want to listen to your song, the one you used to sing while cooking food when Milind and I were small.” Ammu looked at her daughter with a surprise and without

any delay she started humming the tune.....Zindagi pyar ka geet hai.....isse har dil ko gana padega..... Aloka quickly joined in with the next line..... while Ammu looked at her small lost girl with the same old twinkling eyes and innocence.

This was Ammu's Aaloo, who once wanted to become Miss Universe, wanted to give all the answers to the judges, who wanted to greet the huge crowd by waving her hand from the open carriage. Ammu still remembered all the realistic and unrealistic dreams of her daughter.

Aloka and her mother Ammu

represent human nature that tends to put off living. Sometimes in life, we dream of magical gardens over the horizons, instead of enjoying the Lilies that bloom in our living areas before the silvery white netted curtains. Those oriental Lilies wait patiently for souls, who could stand near them and smell their fragrant leaves. Ammu got her daughter's affection, which she longed for so long and Aloka could breathe and live life now. She had forgotten all the small joys of life, she mistook her secondary task (her job) as the primary one.

It was a brand-new life for both the mother and the daughter. The small

household chores like doing the dishes or cooking dal felt enjoyable now. Aloka watered the plants in the morning and prepared tea for Ammu. When the Sun was at peak and crawled like a golden tortoise, Aloka took out the old photo albums from the almirah and sat near Ammu. The memories, they refreshed in their minds brought back the same youth as was in those pictures. While they turned the leaf of the present memory in front, all the abundance of the nature blooming in the verandah ,Rajnigandha, Jasmines, Roses and Ketaki looked at them, in wonder and cherished that lovely slice of life. Ammu's lost daughter Aloka was sitting next to her, smiling and sometimes



giggling.

**“Words are a pretext. It is the inner bond that draws one person to another, not words.”**

**— Rumi**



## **The Purple Rose**

**The purple rose in the vast of orange hope**

**I behold the sight on the canvas of my blue  
heart**

**Who kept you here**

**On this Burmese Teak wood table**

**You seem so lonely**

**yet so calm in your own unique company**

**Are you too waiting for someone?**

I wrote these lines today while looking at the purple flower vase in Your Own Florist, a flowers shop that comes on my way to the clinic. The fresh flower had its own charm and aura. Can flowers too have an aura? I am not sure but I feel this purple rose had. It was so serene and velvety. The mere sight

of it took me to the world of never-ending abundance.

I feel everything has a meaning in this life. Whosoever we meet, see, talk, hear all of these acts have a meaning, nothing happens accidentally in the Universe. The only thing is some experiences give us the joy and some leave an indelible imprint of pain but nothing happens just like this. So, this sight of the purple rose has filled my heart with the hope of finding bliss and love in life despite the fact that till now life had been a plethora of heart-breaking instances.

I have always been a person waiting for people to connect with me. I always long for deep understandings and associations. But of late, I have understood that quite often we fail to understand the other person's expectations. We think from our imaginative points and the other people

create their own roadmap to move ahead. There is a difference in priorities, I am a kind of person who gives priority to relations over other things, but I have always ended up meeting people who contacted me in their free time like a last option. Why? Am I so worthless? Maybe I made myself seem worthless to them. I never asked for respect. I never expected anything in return. I gave my soul to the relations with hidden expectations which were never expressed. I think that was my fault. Then people started taking me for granted.

If I talk about my family, for them it was just a kind of formality to talk to me. I would sometime ask for school fee or any other thing. As siblings we three just fought with each other as this was the normal routine of our family time. We all never learnt to respect one another. On the other hand, I

feel our DNA contained some kind of element in it that made us deep thinkers. My sister Kavita is a extremely emotional being, my brother always used to give his pocket money to the beggars who would stand at our gate.

My father once had a huge fight with my mother as he brought two puppies inside the house who were getting drenched in the rain. And, most importantly my mother never tried to leave her husband or kids, though she gave this warning everyday. Most hilarious fact is, she even observed Karwachauth for the long life of my father.

Ha ha waah insaano! Nobody can understand us.

My mind is again and again going back to the beauty of the The Purple Rose, they say we attract what we are. Am I the Purple Rose? Do I have such charm? I am trying to

feel its murmuring petals, so soft and delicate, little cold yet soothing. And the stick little hard and coarse in texture, If I rub my finger on it, it feels slightly uneven till I reach the thorn which is sharp and hard. It can go deep into the skin and inflict pain.

I feel I am ready for something new in life, something, I have been longing for so long. Something which can bring the much-needed relief to my desperate soul. Am I again falling prey to my predators(my thoughts)?

Am I again on the verge of breaking my heart? But, why do I feel that I can't get something good in life? May be this time it's going to be a totally different scenario. Maybe I find the one I have been seeking forever. I am just ready to let my hair swirl in the cool breeze touching my face. From where does this breeze come in a closed office area like mine? May be it has come

from somewhere far off, the place to which my soul belong. I am feeling a different kind of vibes today. What am I ready for?

There are many people around me, it's 11:30 in the morning and I am waiting for something divine. And here comes somebody, I can see a reflection on the doorsteps, who is going to enter the clinic now? Is it going to be my Cillian Murphy with the purple rose as the height seems a medium stature to me? Who is there? I am ready to welcome this person.

What?

Oh! I forgot it's time for my tea. Nupur has entered with the jug of hot tea and plastic cups. HaHaha, well not a bad sight but I was expecting someone else. But my heart is hopeful. Awww! the aroma of this ginger tea.



**Every soul has a twin, a reflection of themselves – the kindred spirit. No matter where they are or how far away they are, even in different dimensions, they will always find another. This is destiny; this is love.**

**– Julie Dillon**



## **Into the Valley of Ecstasy**

*Tempest-tossed souls, wherever ye may be, under whatsoever conditions ye may live, know this - in the ocean of life the isles of Blessedness are smiling, and the sunny shore of your ideal awaits your coming. Keep your hand firmly upon the helm of thought. In the barque of your soul reclines the commanding Master; He does but sleep; wake Him. Self-control is strength; Right Thought is mastery; Calmness is power. Say unto your heart, "Peace, be still!"*

As a Man Thinketh

**James Allen**

Dr Bakshi has sent me to the nearby school today, to book a dental checkup session to

be held on this Saturday. The school is not much at a distance so I have decided to walk. I will even get a chance to see the afternoon hustle and bustle of our town. This is the month of November, so I just love to walk under the blissful sunlight as my workstation is quite cold nowadays. How beautiful the town looks in winters!

I am seeing smiles everywhere, the smiles which I miss a lot at home. It has always been my biggest desire that someone sees me off with a beautiful smile when I leave for work. Usually, it's the hurry of reaching on time and grabbing my tiffin from my mother who always has frowns while handing over the lunch to everyone.

Kavita keeps herself in washing clothes in the morning and throwing water all over the house so that we know the clothes are getting washed. Once in a while my mother talks to me before I leave for work and that

is to ask for, “When will you get this month’s salary?” As if she does not know that I get it on 10<sup>th</sup> of every month.

My father and brother leave the house before me so I rarely see them. It’s always the feeling of quickly moving out and seeing the outside world. I will so happy when the clinic is opened on Sundays. At least, I get relaxed and eat something of my choice.

Oh! How much I think and forget to enjoy the present.

So, I have reached the school. I will directly move to Mr Shridhar who is the person in charge for medical checkups in the school. He has a small office nearby the clerical office. I have taken permission from the guard to see Mr Shridhar in his office. It’s a small but nice office with a lot of trophies and files but everything is kept neatly. He is not here but I have been told to wait for

him. Such a beautiful melody I can hear from the cuckoo bird who is singing from the branches of the old Peepal tree outside Mr Shridhar's office.

"A very Good morning, madam!", a voice echoed from the door.

" Mr Shridhar is little busy at present, so he has sent me to finalize the time and date for the dental checkup, so that we can prepare a small circular for parents accordingly".

I am just spellbound to see this tall and handsome man, but his perfume has done something to me and I am trying to control my reflexes but I feel today embarrassment is going to make me a fool in front of such a charming man, I am trying to control but....AAAAAAcCCCCChhhhiiii.

"I am sorry, I am allergic to such strong fragrances", my abrupt reaction.

“Oh! I am extremely sorry, if my perfume bothered you, I think I am wearing it in excess today.”

“No, it’s fine. May be due to cold weather, I just felt it. Yes, we can finalize the dates. Dr Bakshi has told me to propose 17<sup>th</sup> November, Saturday. What do you think about it?”

“Yes, Saturday is fine with us and the timing will be 11:00 am to 2:00 pm.”

“Alright, this is fine and we need the hall area, a table and three chairs. I request you to arrange tea around 12:30 pm for a quick break. And, also two bottles of water with two glasses.”

“Done, everything will be arranged, plus, we will provide two teachers and an attendant for your help.”

“Thank you, see you on 17<sup>th</sup>.”

My feet are feeling so heavy. I did not expect to see him here. My heart is feeling something different. Look at the irony of things, how much you get hurt in romantic relationships but you still fall for people again and again. I don't even know his name but felt some warmth when he was there with me in office.

I am feeling as if I am not walking but something is pushing me from behind and taking me towards the clinic. I feel like singing a song just as Anil Kapoor from 1942 A Love Story.

Jaise Sardi ki dhoop, Jaise.....



## **Much Needed Reconciliation**

I have forgiven everything and everyone today. All those who have broken me at any point of time, all the situations which made me feel low. People whom I trusted and then felt like a fool by trusting them. All those who made me feel inferior and tried to put me in categories I did not belong to, all those who tried to snatch my dreams away from me, all those who made me cry throughout nights and feel agitated with the thought of ever letting them inside my heart or mind, I forgive everyone.

What is the use of keeping bad memories with me? Are they going to help me heal my wounds?

I have made up my mind that I am not going to think about any past experience which no more serves my purpose. I am no more

going to miss, crave or think about anything which I wanted in the past but could not get. The thing is if I did not get it, that means it never belonged to me. I cannot keep on wasting my time and energy on thoughts and people who have left and moved ahead and I am still stuck in the old cages.

I have never given the due respect to my own self. I let people compare me with others, I let them make fun of my imperfections, I let them interfere with my peace, I let them take the beauty and charm of my life away from me.

I want to fly now. I want to take the flight of freedom and spread my wings. I am open and receptive to a new life. I want to meet new people and learn about their lives. I don't want to just keep on taking rounds of the old fields of monotony and desperation. I want to be the new me. I am not going to

blame anyone for anything wrong done to me. They were not the only to be blamed. It was I who let them do all that. Why didn't I shout and told my parents that I dislike their petty quarrels? Why didn't I tell the neighbouring aunts that I don't like all that when they tease me for my looks and the decision of not getting married. Who are they to dictate norms to me?

“Since the shadow disappeared

And the light shoed away the dark

I offer you this rose”

my soul said to me.

It welcomed me back.

They say when you feel positive, positivity surrounds you and everything around turns out to be a blessing of the divine. I reached home this evening and could feel some activity inside the house. And there was an

auto rickshaw parked outside, my brother quickly entered the house ignoring me, he was holding some eatables, samosas actually as I could smell the fragrance. The moment I entered the house, I was shocked to see Kavita's In laws sitting in our living area. I thought maybe now they have come up with some tale to take her home as might need somebody to do the household chores. With a sarcastic smile on my face, I greeted everyone and was about to move to my room to change first, I was surprised to see Mr I mean Sri Sri Naresh from Spain wiping off his hands with the towel and my father standing near him as his assistant with folded hands. This is the power of son in law in India.

“Namaste Reena!” said he in a loud and coarse voice.

“Namaste! How are you?” I replied.

“I am absolutely fit and fine”, said Mr Naresh.

“Naresh ji has brought a beautiful handbag for you”, interfered my father.

“Yes, she works in the clinic, and needs to carry beautiful bags, so I brought this silver hand bag for her from Spain”, boosted Mr Naresh.

There is a sudden change in me now, I don't want to go for curt replies, as I used to do earlier. Actually, I am happy that he has come and at least Kavita still has hope of living a happy life, which according to her is only possible if she has a husband.

“Thank you so much, I needed a handbag”, I replied with a genuine smile.

I quickly changed my dress and washed hands to enter the kitchen and to know what actually is happening here. I entered

the kitchen and saw Kavita crying with joy and for the first time, on seeing me, she hugged me tightly and said, “Silly girl, I told you na Naresh ji will come and take me. He has come and wants me to pack my luggage and we will go back home by the 9:30 pm train. The auto is waiting outside to drop us to the station. My mother in law has told me to pack all the things quickly.”

“I am so happy for you”, I told her while holding her hands in mine.

“Stop talking and help me with the dinner”, interrupted my mother.

She was right actually, today we all deserve a good dinner, I told Kavita to go and pack, I will help mother in the preparation of dinner. All this is new to us, we have never tried to help one another. Earlier, I used to move to my room once I entered the house and greet the guests rudely and take my

eatables from the kitchen and then again move to my room. I never knew how to collaborate at home with my own family.

Anyways, I am happy for Kavita, she has wasted a lot of time, here she was listening to all kinds of things from my mother, from the aunties around, at least now she will have a family of her own. Usually, this is the thinking here in my society that it's better to cry at in-laws house than to stay with your own parents in your thirties. This is the pathetic thinking of the social set up. Kavita never tried to find a job or to learn anything new instead of missing Naresh. But, why should I judge her? It's her life and her own decision and for her Naresh ji's return is just like Lord Rama's return from exile. In her world of fantasies her husband is not less than God Himself.

The clock chimed 8 and we were all at the gate to see off Kavita with her three big

bags and couple of hand bags. She is emotional about leaving the house of her parents, for her the scoldings of mother and father were equivalent to adoration. She hugged all of us without thinking about the response of the other person and sat in the auto rickshaw, there were two auto rickshaws now as the luggage was quite heavy, so her father-in-law sat in the second one along with the bags. As the vehicle got speed and moved away with its own music of loud noise, we all started to turn towards the house and quietly continued our own things. Mother moved to the kitchen, brother went to his room, my father sat in the balcony and opened his file and I was deciding upon whether to go to my room or to the kitchen. I decided to choose the kitchen and see if mother needed something and I was shocked to see Amma sobbing. It was for the first time I saw her emotional with pain and the outlet



was sobbing not shouting or cursing. I held her from shoulders as I stood behind her and kept my head on her back near her neck. Her skin gave me the relief I needed badly. She did not say anything and continued with her work.

I realized the disadvantages of miscommunication or rather in our case no communication. We as a family, never tried to bring the balance within the four walls. We never let our emotions join us together as the beads of same string. We never asked one another how we were, how our day was. Amma became quieter after that day. There was a silence in my house. And I felt this silence was actually required to heal this household slowly.



## **Twinflame!**

***“He touched my soul long before I knew  
what his hands felt like.”***

***— Nikki Rowe***

Twinflames and soulmates, these are few of my favourite topics to explore. Once, I spent a whole week exploring Karmic connections and their effect on our relationships. Do these concepts really exist? Do we really have connections with people from previous life spans? I am confused as sometimes we feel connected with the other person but it is not necessary that they are a good choice for life partner. Sometimes these connects are just similar tastes and nothing else. These can be places

to confide ourselves but not necessarily places for romantic relationships.

They say they are yins to our yang, sun to our moons and light to our darkness, they are mirrors to our own fears and doubts, but also to our beauty and calmness. They bring out emotional, psychological and spiritual upliftment. And, some uncanny synchronicities exist between them. This is all googled information. I don't know how much of it really exists. I am little doubtful whether to think more about it or just go with the flow of life.

I have chosen to go with the flow.

*I believe being in the flow means being aware that the river of life is flowing to us at every moment. Being in the flow means accepting whatever comes and putting it to good use, before passing it on. Going with the flow means allowing whatever comes to*

*move on freely, without holding on in any way.*

### **After two months**

Hours of chats on WhatsApp and calls, phone chiming in between, sending each other our funny photographs from the work station sometimes posing with a cup of tea and at other times just gazing at the screen. His virtual presence made me feel like a Disney princess thinking of her prince. His sense of humour and loud laughter had become my favourite things.

Mayank has brought the long-awaited excitement in my life. My soul feels at peace now. He is an understanding person. I just want even more of him. His choice of simple buttoned shirts and trousers, his brown strapped watch, his love for sweet corns, his self praises for his cooking skills, all this make me adore him more and more.

He and I, we are big fans of Zakir Khan's stand ups. We have together seen his videos while sitting in the café nearby, I usually lean on his shoulder and laugh like a mad girl while watching the videos. We usually order garlic bread and Coffee. Mayank teases me all the time for my choice of footwears. I don't know how much I try but I always get me footwear broken in the front and it looks so untidy. He has taken me thrice to the footwear shop to buy a new pair which ends up in the same old way.

Why do I feel that he is the one?

Actually, the most important thing is I feel so much at home when I am with him. I feel free and unstressed. I forget even the long boring life I had in the past. Everything feels so beautiful now. He is a mature person, who knows the importance of work and family. he does not waste time in beating

about the bushes and having unachievable targets. He is so happy with his own self; he loves himself and his family and that is why he is able to give me those vibrational frequencies which I always wanted. I have started loving myself even more since I meet him.

Some days my heart takes me back to the old fears of losing love and charm in the relationship. All my desires again start to feel tremors of cheating and deceiving. I have these nightmares that once I move to the next step with Mayank, he is going to lose interest in me and then the same old patterns will repeat themselves; loneliness, crying till late nights, listening to sad songs and watching break up movies. But God forbids, this time it will be an end to all my hopes if this happens. I have never met a person like him and already for me he is the family rather more than the family.

It was love at first sight, the cliched phrase. The moment I saw him in Mr Shridhar's office, I fell for him. And then there was this continuous connectivity through phone or visits to know more about the dental checkup day. I did not know whether this dental checkup camp would cure the kids of their cavities or tooth ache but for me it was the much-desired therapy I was waiting for so long. Mayank also felt the same for me, he told me all this while sitting under the Neem tree in the park. He told me how he also wanted to talk and discuss so many things with me but was hesitant enough that I might consider him to be a flirt. He had someone in his life a year ago but due to some misunderstanding, things could not move the way they both wanted. So they decided to part their ways. I can understand that.



I have decided to seek advice of Mr & Mrs Bakshi before taking any further decision, as they both are the only people who would describe the pros and cons of this association in the best way. They have led a peaceful and balanced married life and had faced the tiny uproars of the difficult situations with patience and composure. Therefore, I would take expert advice this time before assuming it to be my ultimate path. And, also time and situations have taught me to take a deep breath and reflect on important decisions before reaching at the conclusion and later despise your own decision-making skills.

**“What greater thing is there for two human souls than to feel that they are joined for life? They are there to strengthen each other and to be at one**

**with each other in silent unspeakable  
memories.”**

**— George Eliot**

## Epilogue

To understand the sphinxlike enigmatic human personalities, one needs deeper understanding of the inscrutable psychological and physiological traits that each soul carries. People like Rene spend various years of their lives at places they feel alien to their inner worlds. The domestic front does not help Rene develop her inner beauty and thoughts but her soul leads her to people like Dr Bakshi and Mayank. She had the faith that someday she would get the life where her soul feels at home and ultimately with the power of her belief, she reached that place.

We all have many thoughts within us and sometimes we force ourselves to be at

certain places where we actually feel choked and wish to escape. Each day we have a feeling within us to go somewhere nobody knows us and start afresh but we keep on telling ourselves that we are bound with the chains of societal pressures. In fact, if we go inwards, that journey can actually take us to the places we want to see in the outer world. Rene had deep conversations with her own self and that actually helped her manifest a dream world, which later unfolded itself on its own in front of her.

Rene's parents gradually learnt how to create a peaceful atmosphere at home. Her sister Kavita was happy now, Naresh ji did not return to Spain rather, started working in India. Her brother Atul started

talking to her and even joined her and Mayank for a cup of coffee. Rene told her parents about Mayank and his family and their decision to move ahead in life together.